

Koller Auktionen - Lot 3236

A187 Art Impressionniste & Moderne - vendredi 07 décembre 2018, 16h00



PAUL KLEE

(Münchenbuchsee/Bern 1879 - 1940 Muralto)

Nächtliche Landschaft (Nocturnal landscape). 1937.

Coloured crayon on primed paper, on artists cardboard .

Signed lower left: Klee, as well as dated and titled in the centre of the board: 1937.p.1.
nächtliche Landschaft.

25.3 x 38.3 cm (Cardboard 33 x 45.8 cm).

Provenance: - Lily Klee, Bern (1940-1946). - Klee-Gesellschaft, Bern (from 1946). - Lawrence J. Heller, Washington/Dickerson. - Richard L. Feigen, New York/Chicago (with label on the reverse). - Galerie Tarica, Geneva/Paris. - Private collection, Italy. - Koller Auctions, Zurich, 21 June 2013, lot 3233. - Private collection Switzerland. Exhibitions: -

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Bologna 1985, Galleria de'foscherari. Morandi e il suo tempo, no. 111008 (with label on the reverse). - Bologna 2000/01, Museo Morandi. Paul Klee, figure e metamorfosi, 25 November 2000 - 4 March 2001, no. 81 (with ill.). - Milan 2007, Fondazione A. Mazzotta. Paul Klee - Teatro Magico, 26 January - 13 May 2007 (with label on the reverse). Literature: - Foundation Paul-Klee/ Kunstmuseum Bern (Ed.): Catalogue raisonné Paul Klee, vol. 7 (1934-1937), Bern 2003, p. 249, no. 7037 (with ill.). - Spiller, Jürg (Ed): Paul Klee. Unendliche Naturgeschichte. Prinzipielle Ordnung der bildnerischen Mittel verbunden mit Naturstudium, und konstruktive Kompositionswege. Form- und Gestaltungslehre, vol. 2, Basel/Stuttgart 1970 (with ill.). After a house search of Paul Klee's Dessau apartment by the National Socialists in March of 1933 and his termination without notice as the director of the Düsseldorf Academy, he emigrated to Bern at the end of 1933. The recognised and celebrated 55-year-old artist, who had been at home in the European art metropolises of the 1910s and 1920s, felt isolated and alienated in Bern. In 1936 he suffered from severe progressive scleroderma, which led to his death four years later. Despite his international recognition with exhibitions in London and New York, he found it difficult to rediscover and solidify his artistic language. Nevertheless, he accomplished precisely this around the year 1937 and created an extensive, self-contained body of late work which provided an inexhaustible repertoire of inspiration for the subsequent generation of abstract artists. "But Klee's final introversion, too, would be turned outward. As his identity folded into that of his art, it also folded into the ongoing history of the avant-garde. For these late works provided a legacy with which that avant-garde was to renew itself after Klee was gone, in an abstract language that merged symbol and self." (Exh.cat.: Paul Klee, His Life and Work, Museum of Modern Art, New York 1987, p.79). The present work, *Nächtliche Landschaft*, comes from this late phase in Paul Klee's oeuvre, and yet it is almost unique in the context of the time. Graphic symbols and ciphers play no role, nor does his increasing experimentation with unusual techniques and materials or the use of colour. If viewed from a distance, our work appears as a black surface. Only upon approaching the work, one detects the floral forms, which are reminiscent

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of diverse types of plants and trees. Klee masterfully breathes depth and vitality into the pitch-black sheet : depth is created through the different sizes and shapes of the trees and plants, but also through the round, partly open forms in the upper area of the picture that suggest the night sky. He hatches the forms, partly horizontally, partly vertically, partly combined, so that the image gains momentum. The black of the sheet continuously shines through, and so the trees seem to sink into the nocturnal blackness, yet effectively stand out through their subtle colours at the same time. Klee does not set the shapes and colours against each other in this wonderful work, but skilfully lets them overlap and merge into a conditional unity.

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